

# News Release



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## Arkansas' Unemployment Rate Rises to 4.7 Percent

Little Rock, Arkansas – Labor Force data, produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and released today by the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), shows Arkansas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose four-tenths of a percentage point from a revised rate of 4.3 percent in January to 4.7 percent in February 2006. The United States' jobless rate, at 4.8 percent, was one-tenth of a percentage point above last month's rate of 4.7 percent.

In February 2006, Arkansas' total employment declined 5,600 to 1,327,100. The number of unemployed Arkansans increased 4,700 to 65,100. Manufacturing layoffs and further cutbacks in retail jobs were partly to blame.

DWS Communications Director Kimberly Friedman said, "Despite the upturn in unemployment between January and February, the jobless rate in Arkansas is down three-tenths of a percentage point from one year ago."

**Table 1**  
**ARKANSAS CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY**  
(Seasonally Adjusted)

Item	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	1,392,200	1,393,100	1,343,200	-900	49,000
Employment	1,327,100	1,332,700	1,275,800	-5,600	51,300
Unemployment	65,100	60,400	67,400	4,700	-2,300
Unemployment Rate	4.7	4.3	5.0	0.4	-0.3
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.8	4.7	5.4	0.1	-0.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Note: Unemployment rates were computed from unrounded data.

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

Arkansas' nonfarm payroll employment (not seasonally adjusted) rose 6,900 between January and February to 1,176,400. Six of the 11 major sectors experienced increases, two declined and three showed no change. The largest addition this month occurred in **government** (+3,700) where student workers and nonteaching personnel returned from semester break.

Over the year, nonfarm payroll jobs in Arkansas advanced 14,300. Seven major sectors had gains greater than 1,000, which were partially offset by the loss of 5,400 in **manufacturing**.

### Monthly Employment Activity January 2006 to February 2006

**Government** added 3,700 jobs over the month due to student workers and nonteaching personnel returning from semester break.

Employment in the **leisure and hospitality** sector increased 2,100 to total 91,600. Accommodations and food services (+1,400) experienced robust hiring in part due to the opening of the racing season at Oaklawn Park.

**Professional and business services** employment rose 1,000 to 113,200 in February. The majority of the increase was attributed to administrative and support services.

**Educational and health services** gained 900 jobs as the result of advances in health care and social assistance and the return of student workers to private educational facilities following semester break.

**Construction and other services** added 300 and 200 jobs, respectively.

Employment in **trade, transportation, and utilities** decreased 500 to 243,200. The largest contraction was traced to seasonal declines in retail trade (-1,100), with reductions noted at general merchandise and department stores. The number of jobs in transportation-warehousing-utilities (+400) rebounded along with wholesale trade (+200).

**Manufacturing** employment fell 800 in February to 195,700. Nondurable goods dropped 600 while durable goods lost 200. The largest decreases occurred in food and furniture-related products.

Job totals in the **natural resources-mining, information, and financial activities** sectors were unchanged over the month.

## Yearly Employment Activity February 2005 to February 2006

Employment in the **government** sector rose 4,600 over the year. The largest gain was 3,100 in local government.

**Professional and business services** expanded over the year, adding 4,400 jobs. The most notable increase (+3,000) was in the administrative and support services category.

The health care and social assistance segment was responsible for the gain of 3,200 in the **educational and health services** sector.

Employment in **trade, transportation, and utilities** rose 2,600 over the year. The greatest concentration of new hires was in general merchandise stores (+1,200) and truck transportation (+1,000).

**Leisure and hospitality** added 1,500 jobs. Hiring in accommodations and food services accounted for 73 percent of the increase.

A gain of 1,400 was posted in **construction**. The largest contribution came from specialty trade contractors (+1,200).

The number of jobs in the **financial activities** sector grew by 1,100. Finance and insurance companies were responsible for the growth.

The number of jobs in **other services** rose 700 over the year.

Improved technology in the mining industry translated to an addition of 400 jobs in the **natural resources and mining** sector.

The **information** industry declined 200.

There were 5,400 jobs lost in **manufacturing**. Employment in the nondurable goods sector decreased 3,500. The largest reduction occurred in the food manufacturing industry (-1,700). Jobs in durable goods dropped 1,900.

**Table 2**  
**NON-FARM PAYROLL JOBS**  
**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**(Not Seasonally Adjusted)**

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Group	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	1,176,400	1,169,500	1,162,100	6,900	14,300
Goods Producing	255,000	255,500	258,600	-500	-3,600
<b>Natural Resources &amp; Mining</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>6,600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>400</b>
Mining	4,400	4,400	3,800	0	600
<b>Construction</b>	<b>52,300</b>	<b>52,000</b>	<b>50,900</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1,400</b>
Construction of Buildings	11,700	11,600	11,600	100	100
Heavy & Civil Engineering Construction	9,800	9,800	9,700	0	100
Specialty Trade Contractors	30,800	30,600	29,600	200	1,200
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>195,700</b>	<b>196,500</b>	<b>201,100</b>	<b>-800</b>	<b>-5,400</b>
Durable Goods	104,800	105,000	106,700	-200	-1,900
Wood Products	13,600	13,500	13,600	100	0
Primary Metals	8,200	8,100	8,100	100	100
Fabricated Metals	18,100	18,100	18,000	0	100
Machinery	13,400	13,500	14,000	-100	-600
Electrical Equipment	12,900	13,000	12,900	-100	0
Transportation Equipment	16,100	16,000	16,300	100	-200
Furniture & Related Products	6,700	6,900	7,400	-200	-700
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	5,800	5,800	6,000	0	-200
Nondurable Goods	90,900	91,500	94,400	-600	-3,500
Food	49,500	49,700	51,200	-200	-1,700
Paper & Printing	16,100	16,200	16,700	-100	-600
Plastics & Rubber Products	12,500	12,600	13,100	-100	-600
Service Providing	921,400	914,000	903,500	7,400	17,900
<b>Trade, Transportation, &amp; Utilities</b>	<b>243,200</b>	<b>243,700</b>	<b>240,600</b>	<b>-500</b>	<b>2,600</b>
Wholesale Trade	47,500	47,300	46,800	200	700
Retail Trade	130,100	131,200	128,800	-1,100	1,300
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	17,800	17,700	17,500	100	300
General Merchandise Stores	36,700	37,200	35,500	-500	1,200
Department Stores	8,900	9,200	8,700	-300	200
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	65,600	65,200	65,000	400	600
Utilities	6,500	6,500	6,400	0	100
Truck Transportation	35,500	35,300	34,500	200	1,000
Warehousing & Storage	9,800	9,900	9,400	-100	400
<b>Information</b>	<b>20,200</b>	<b>20,200</b>	<b>20,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-200</b>
Publishing Industries	6,600	6,600	6,700	0	-100
Telecommunications	8,100	8,100	8,800	0	-700
<b>Financial Activities</b>	<b>51,800</b>	<b>51,800</b>	<b>50,700</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,100</b>
Finance & Insurance	38,600	38,600	37,500	0	1,100
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	13,200	13,200	13,200	0	0
<b>Professional &amp; Business Services</b>	<b>113,200</b>	<b>112,200</b>	<b>108,800</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>4,400</b>
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	37,300	36,900	36,100	400	1,200
Management of Companies	23,700	23,700	23,500	0	200
Administrative & Support Services	52,200	51,600	49,200	600	3,000
Employment Services	25,100	24,700	23,800	400	1,300
<b>Educational &amp; Health Services</b>	<b>148,600</b>	<b>147,700</b>	<b>145,400</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>3,200</b>
Educational Services	12,400	12,000	13,200	400	-800
Health Care & Social Assistance	136,200	135,700	132,200	500	4,000
Ambulatory Health Care	42,200	42,100	40,200	100	2,000
Hospitals	42,300	42,100	41,900	200	400
Nursing & Residential Care Facilities	26,600	26,600	25,800	0	800
Social Assistance	25,100	24,900	24,300	200	800
<b>Leisure &amp; Hospitality</b>	<b>91,600</b>	<b>89,500</b>	<b>90,100</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>1,500</b>
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	8,600	7,900	8,200	700	400
Accommodations & Food Services	83,000	81,600	81,900	1,400	1,100
Accommodation Services	10,400	10,100	10,200	300	200
Food Services	72,600	71,500	71,700	1,100	900
<b>Other Services</b>	<b>42,200</b>	<b>42,000</b>	<b>41,500</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>700</b>
Repair and Maintenance	9,000	9,100	9,200	-100	-200
<b>Government</b>	<b>210,600</b>	<b>206,900</b>	<b>206,000</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>4,600</b>
Federal Government	20,400	20,500	20,700	-100	-300
State Government	71,200	68,400	69,400	2,800	1,800
Local Government	119,000	118,000	115,900	1,000	3,100

Source: Department of Workforce Services, Monthly Survey of Employers.  
 Estimates are based on first quarter 2005 benchmark.  
 Current month's data are preliminary; previous month's data are revised.

## Metropolitan Statistical Area Labor Force Data

Unemployment rates for the state's six metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in February showed increases. Rates ranged from 3.5 percent in the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers MSA to 8.0 percent in the Pine Bluff MSA.

**Table 3**  
**EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS**  
**METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS**  
**(Not Seasonally Adjusted)**

**Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers MSA**  
**(Benton, Washington and Madison Counties in Arkansas; McDonald County in Missouri)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	228,450	227,150	215,775	1,300	12,675
Employment	220,450	220,275	207,950	175	12,500
Unemployment	8,000	6,875	7,825	1,125	175
Unemployment Rate	3.5	3.0	3.6	0.5	-0.1

**Fort Smith MSA**  
**(Crawford, Sebastian and Franklin Counties in Arkansas; Sequoyah and LeFlore Counties in Oklahoma)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	138,175	138,275	134,325	-100	3,850
Employment	131,725	132,325	127,200	-600	4,525
Unemployment	6,450	5,950	7,125	500	-675
Unemployment Rate	4.7	4.3	5.3	0.4	-0.6

**Hot Springs MSA**  
**(Garland County)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	42,475	41,400	42,025	1,075	450
Employment	40,175	39,325	39,375	850	800
Unemployment	2,300	2,075	2,650	225	-350
Unemployment Rate	5.4	5.0	6.3	0.4	-0.9

**Jonesboro MSA**  
**(Craighead and Poinsett Counties)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	57,650	57,350	56,200	300	1,450
Employment	54,400	54,425	52,825	-25	1,575
Unemployment	3,250	2,925	3,375	325	-125
Unemployment Rate	5.6	5.1	6.0	0.5	-0.4

**Little Rock-North Little Rock MSA**  
**(Faulkner, Grant, Lonoke, Perry, Pulaski and Saline Counties)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	344,150	340,375	332,175	3,775	11,975
Employment	327,575	325,575	314,600	2,000	12,975
Unemployment	16,575	14,800	17,575	1,775	-1,000
Unemployment Rate	4.8	4.3	5.3	0.5	-0.5

**Pine Bluff MSA**  
**(Cleveland, Jefferson and Lincoln Counties)**

	February 2006	January 2006	February 2005	Net Change From January 2006	Net Change From February 2005
Civilian Labor Force	47,425	47,125	46,900	300	525
Employment	43,650	43,650	42,950	0	700
Unemployment	3,775	3,475	3,950	300	-175
Unemployment Rate	8.0	7.4	8.4	0.6	-0.4

Source: Department of Workforce Services and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Unemployment Comparisons: Minority and Youth

Utilizing data from the monthly BLS Current Population Survey, the Department of Workforce Services estimated the February unemployment rate for minorities in Arkansas at 8.9 percent. The jobless rate for whites was 3.8 percent. The youth unemployment rate was estimated at 16.9 percent. The jobless rate for minority youth was 24.8 percent, while the unemployment rate for white youth was 14.6 percent.

**Table 4**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR MINORITIES AND YOUTH**  
**ARKANSAS AND UNITED STATES**  
**(Seasonally Adjusted)**

	<b>February 2006 Arkansas</b>	<b>February 2006 U.S.</b>	<b>January 2006 Arkansas</b>	<b>January 2006 U.S.</b>	<b>February 2005 Arkansas</b>	<b>February 2005 U.S.</b>
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.4
<b>Minority</b>	8.9	9.3	8.3	8.9	9.5	10.8
<b>White</b>	3.8	4.1	3.5	4.1	4.1	4.6
<b>Youth (16 to 19)</b>	16.9	15.4	15.8	15.3	18.0	17.6
<b>Minority Youth</b>	24.8	30.8	23.4	31.4	26.2	32.1
<b>White Youth</b>	14.6	12.7	13.7	13.3	15.6	15.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Note: The minority, white, and youth unemployment rates for Arkansas were calculated by the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) by applying ratios from the 2000 Census to data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.